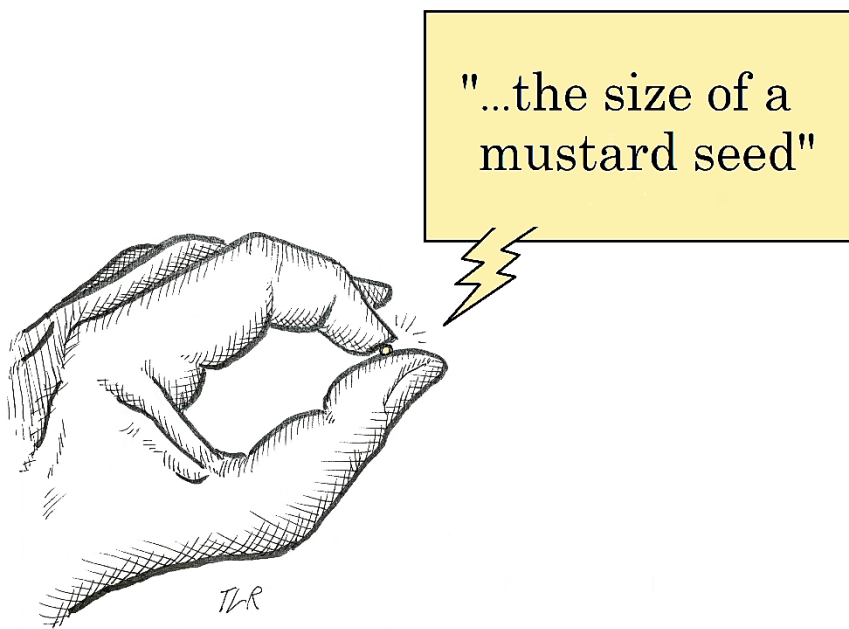


A MATTER OF FAITH



THUS SAYS THE LORD: "CURSED IS THE MAN WHO TRUSTS IN MAN AND MAKES FLESH HIS STRENGTH, WHOSE HEART TURNS AWAY FROM THE LORD... BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO TRUSTS IN THE LORD, WHOSE TRUST IS THE LORD."—JEREMIAH 17:5, 7 (NASB95)

Valley Grace Brethren Church of Armagh, PA
July 21st, AD 2024

THE LORD'S DAY

The Twenty-first Day of July, *in the Year of our Lord 2024*

Welcome to the worship services of Valley Grace Brethren Church!



Sunday School—9:30 AM.

We continue our exciting and illuminating studies in Church History, looking at historic debates over the nature of God.

Morning Worship—10:30 AM.

Call to Worship:* *"O, How I Love Jesus"* (#281; Chorus only).

Invocation.*

Hymn: *"Faith is the Victory"* (#455).

Prayer for Tithes & Offerings.

Scripture Reading: **Acts 16:23-34.**

Prayer, Praises, & Testimony.

Hymn: *"Only Trust Him"* (#312).

Announcements.

Hymn: *"'Tis so Sweet to Trust in Jesus"* (#250).

Dismissal of Youth for Children's Church.

Greeting One Another.

Message: *"AND YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES" (ON FAITH).*

Closing Hymn:* *"Blessed Assurance"* (#197, vv. 1, 3).

Benediction.*



Week of July 14–July 20

Sunday School—6; Morning Worship—14;

Midweek—5; Offering—\$563.⁰⁰;

Videos: *"Matter of Grace"*—71 views; *"On Man & Sin"*—61 views

MIDWEEK PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY: 6:30 PM.

The *Evangelism Explosion* method of sharing the Gospel: This Week's Focus: "It's about FAITH!"

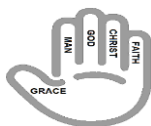
Recap of our prior studies:

1) Salvation is a matter of GRACE; it cannot be earned (Eph. 2:8-9). (*The Hitchhiker's Thumb—a FREE RIDE!*)

2) WHY can't we earn it? Because WE are SINNERS! (Rm.3:10,23; Isa.53:6, 64:6). (*The pointing, accusing Index Finger!*)

3) GOD (represented by the tall Central Finger) is HOLY (Isa. 6:3), and MUST judge sin! But in LOVE (1Jn4:8), He offers us a WAY (Jn 3:16,14:6)!

4) The WAY: the BRIDEGROOM (the Ring Finger)—JESUS CHRIST! We need to know 1) WHO He is (Col. 2:9), and 2) WHAT He did (Isa. 53)!



"But HOW do the benefits of His atonement become mine?"

5) THIS WEEK'S FOCUS: "IT'S A MATTER OF FAITH!"

The LITTLE FINGER in the "*Gospel Hand* reminds us that our FAITH, though a small thing (Matt. 17:20), joins us to a GREAT SAVIOR!

1. Only the right key—genuine saving-faith—can open the door! Other keys simply won't work! (Gal. 2:16, Eph. 2:8-9)

2. What saving-faith IS NOT...

- a. ...mere head knowledge, or intellectual assent (James 2:19).
- b. ...only trusting God in material or temporal matters (e.g., health, finances, personal safety)—and neglecting the *spiritual*.

3. What saving-faith IS: trusting in Jesus Christ and in His work on the Cross ALONE for our salvation—rather than in *ourselves!*
>>FAITH involves (1) knowledge, (2) assent, and (3) TRUST!

We are called to "BELIEVE:" i.e., to entrust one's eternal well-being unto Christ and His atoning-work (John 3:16,18,36; 1Jn 5:13).

Acts 16:31: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."

Some key points of emphasis:

1) In turning to Christ, we are acknowledging our sin in repentance, and transferring our trust from self unto Christ.

2) We should emphasize in witnessing that good works such as church membership/attendance, and baptism cannot contribute a single thing to our redemption (Isa. 64:6, Eph. 2:8-9, Gal. 2:16).

3) Faith is simply the beggar's empty-hand reaching for *alms*; it is not to be seen as a meritorious "*good work*." Walking down the aisle or reciting certain words are not "*sacramental rites*"!

FAITH ALONE is not "*easy-believism!*" A genuinely repentant soul with a regenerated heart accepts Jesus as Savior and LORD (Phil. 16:31), resulting in a CHANGED LIFE (Eph. 2:10; James 2:14, 26, 2Pet. 2:22)!

Pastor's Note: Due to the issues with Facebook, we have been delayed in getting reports on Baby Gus. Here is the latest from his mother, Amanda.

BIG GUS UPDATE: Hello friends. This update is long overdue and



offers some encouragement. Over the last week, Gus successfully transitioned from the CICU to the PCU. We are likely only weeks away from going home! Gus is doing well, though he struggles to gain weight. His move to the PCU has been positive, and today was filled with smiles. Our team has been focused on nutrition and fluid balance. Gus, diagnosed with end-stage renal disease (ESRD), faces challenges with peritoneal dialysis (PD), which he undergoes for 12 hours nightly.

While we're excited to go home, we feel the weight of upcoming challenges. Caring for someone with ESRD is different from what we faced after his heart transplant. The demands are significant and exhausting, especially after nearly eight months. We are entering a new phase of treatment, closely monitoring his heart health and managing his kidney care in hopes of a kidney transplant. We are preparing our home and building our support team for this marathon ahead.

Thank you to everyone who has followed our journey and prayed for us these past months. Your prayers are needed as we navigate this new phase. We're not going home cured, but rather to manage serious illness. I may start a Caring Bridge for updates. Much thanks, friends. Amanda

"I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done." Ps. 9:1

AFRICA UPDATE: Pastor Keith Merriman (7/12/24)

Dear beloved brethren,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! Pastor Salomon and 35 members of the Mfomakap GBC, along with 6 American medical missionary personnel, are in Nnemeyong (East Cameroon) for a medical missions outreach Thursday – Saturday. Please pray for journey mercies, health, wisdom and especially that many would be saved as they minister to the physical needs of that village and the surrounding ones. Pastor Salomon and Mary are extremely joyful for the house we were able to purchase for them. They still need a few things for their home, chairs, washer, dryer (they have never owned a washer and dryer in their lives) if you would like to contribute to help purchase these items please send check to Tom Johnson, memo – “Zambo house.” Thanks and God bless for your prayers and financial support. Keith

*Support should be sent to: CGBCI Foreign Missions, c/o Pastor Tom Johnson;
222 Marker Drive, Somerset, PA, 15501*

SPECIAL UPDATE ON BABY GUS

Gus is with the Lord (7/20/24, 8:00 PM)

Pastor's Reese's Note: Dear praying friends, it is with the greatest sadness that I put together this special updated bulletin insert on Saturday evening, at 8:50 PM. Despite the optimism that was expressed in the post that I included in this week's bulletin (which I completed early on Friday) in which they were preparing to bring Gus home, the situation with Baby Gus began to change dramatically throughout the day on Friday. On Friday, Gus experienced two cardiac arrest episodes, and his condition then began to deteriorate rapidly. Finally, on Saturday, Baby Gus passed away. **Thank you all (!)** for your months of faithfully praying for this little one, and please continue to pray for his parents, Mark and Amanda Joubert, as well as for the rest of his family (Gus was the grandson of Pastor Scott Libby of the Irasburg Grace Brethren Church of Vermont). While we cannot fully understand or discern the Lord's will in something like this, we nevertheless rejoice in His goodness and greatness, and bow in worship before His Holy Thron as we praise Him for His lovingkindness in giving us the good and precious gift of Gus' life (James 1:17), and for graciously extending that life far beyond what was deemed possible. The God who sovereignly ordains all things indeed has His perfect plan! Perhaps Gus' dad, Mark, in a Twitter post shortly before Gus' passing, expressed it best:

"He belongs to the Lord. May his will be done."

Here is the notice from the Conservative Grace Brethren Mailbox, which is operated by Pastor Dan Pierce:

"After numerous tests following Gus's cardiac arrests it was determined earlier today that there was no brain activity. Mark and Amanda made the heart-breaking decision to remove him from the vent and were able to hold their dear Gus for the last hours of his life as they gave him back to the Lord. Please be praying now for the Joubert and Libby families. They thank everyone for the caring concern, compassion, and outpouring of prayer over the last 8 1/2 months."